

Thomas Darlington House
228 West Street Road (State Route #926)
1 mile west of State Route 202
West Chester Vicinity
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-11110

HABS
PA
15-BIRM.V,
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington Planning and Service Center
1730 North Lynn Street
Arlington, Virginia

THOMAS DARLINGTON HOUSE

HABS
PA
15-216M.V

Location: 228 West Street Road (State Route 926), 1 mile west of State Route 202; West Chester vicinity, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Herbert B. Spackman, Thornbury Farm, Chester R.D. #5, Pennsylvania.

Statement of Significance: This small stone house dating from about 1800 once belonged to Atwater Kent.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Thomas Darlington bought the property 1782, and the little corner chimney house was built c. 1800. There is a large 1709 (with additions) house on the property. Darlington deeded it to his son Abraham in 1789, and he to his son Abraham, Jr. His son, William Penn Darlington, inherited it and sold it 1883 to Caleb M. Walter. In 1895 it was sold to John Noble and in 1924 to E. G. Brinton; in 1927 to H. S. Kamerly; in 1930 to F. S. Kamerly; in 1930 to Atwater Kent; in 1945 to Fisher Boyd; and in 1948 to the present owner, Herbert B. Spackman.
2. Date of erection: c. 1800.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: The original side-hall house had two rooms on the first floor and two in the second with board partitions.
5. Alterations and additions: A 20th century frame one-room, one-story addition was added to the south front; the partition that made the first floor into two rooms has been removed.
6. Important old views and references:
 - a. Old views: Eleanor Raymond, Early Domestic Architecture of Pennsylvania (New York: William Helburn, 1931), Plate 65, lower right hand corner, has a picture of the house before the kitchen was added on the south front.
 - b. References: Sources of information, all to be found in

the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester.
Classified printed and clipping files under the heading:
Thornbury Township. Lands.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

No information.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

None known.

D. Supplemental Material:

Direct quotations from the following.

1. "A Valuable Property.- by referring to our advertising columns to-day, will be found the advertisement of Mr. Wm. P. Darlington, who offers at private sale the old Darlington homestead property in Thornbury township, near Birmingham Friends' Meeting House. This large and well cultivated property contains 157 acres and in many respects possesses advantages which are not often found contained in one property. It is well watered - in fact water in every field, and a splended limestone quarry is located thereon. The buildings are many, large and in excellent condition, the fences in good repair, and in every way it is a place to suit any one desiring an excellent home and a thrifty farm. The terms will be made liberal, and Mr. Darlington will give all further necessary particulars - if he is called upon or addressed by letter."

["Daily Local News", West Chester, Pa., November 22, 1880.]

2. "Surveyed After Many Years.- The farm lately purchased by Caleb M. Walter, situated in Thornbury Township, Chester county, and formerly the property of William Penn Darlington, West Chester, has recently been surveyed, by Edward Ashbridge, the first time in a century. The farm was found to contain eleven more acres than was supposed, making in all 168 acres and 28 perches. There never was a line stone placed in position until Mr. Ashbridge set it. This tract is a very old one. It first came into the possession of the Darlington family through Thomas Darlington great grandfather of our townsman, William Penn Darlington, he purchasing it at Sheriff's sale from one Isaac Davis. The farm is what has been called "revolutionary ground" because of bullets, etc., having been found within its domains, which were doubtless planted there during the struggle of our forefathers more than a century ago."

["Daily Local News", West Chester, Pa., June 9, 1883.]

3. "Caleb M. Walter, of the Wayside stock farm, Thornbury, is building an addition to his barn which will be used for a straw house and stabling for horses. He is also building a new fence along the road near his residence and making other improvements."

["Daily Local News", West Chester, Pa., November 1, 1884.]

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This small stone house has a corner chimney and dates from about 1800.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 22'-1" (south front) x 15'-11"; one-and-a-half stories.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction: Random ashlar of dressed serpentine stone.
4. Chimneys: Original chimney in northwest corner of house.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Original front door in south front, now opening into kitchen.
 - b. Windows and shutters: South front now covered by kitchen addition but there are two six-over-six-light double-hung wooden sash windows on the north side. The west side has a three-over-six-light double-hung wooden sash window on the first level and a four light wooden casement window on the second level. There are no shutters.
6. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof; steep pitch with wooden shingles on original section, asbestos on kitchen addition.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Wooden cornice on north and south sides

probably a replacement of original cornice.

c. Dormers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The original house had two rooms on each floor.
2. Stairways: The only staircase is located in the southwest corner of house. It is a circular wooden stair of ten risers, each approximately 8" in height.
3. Flooring: First floor has new one on top of old.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.
5. Doorways and doors: There are no doorways within the original house.
6. Trim: Mostly original, though mantle on corner fireplace, first floor is gone.
7. Lighting: Modern electricity.
8. Heating: Original fireplace remains; modern radiator heating.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: The house faces south onto a field, though it is directly on State Route #926.
2. Walks, driveways etc.: A driveway to the east of the house (from State Route #926).
3. Landscaping, gardens etc.: Lawn and some random plantings.

Prepared by Bart Anderson
Curator, Chester County
Historical Society
National Park Service
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